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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/51/L.4)]

51/5. Universal Congress on the Panama Canal

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 50/12 of 7 November 1995 supporting the convening of the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, which is to be held at Panama City from 7 to 10 September 1997,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 50/12, 1/

Taking into account resolution 1376 (XXVI-O/96) of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States entitled "The Panama Canal in the Twenty-first Century" and resolution 1379 (XXVI-O/96) on the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, both adopted on 6 June 1996, in which, inter alia, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States noted with satisfaction the harmonious transition process in which the Governments of Panama and the United States of America are participating, through their diplomatic missions, the Panama Canal Commission, the Interoceanic Region Authority and the Transition Commission,

Having considered the letter dated 27 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, 2/ outlining the work being done by the Government of Panama in connection with the holding of the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal and

1/ A/51/281.

2/ A/51/477.

indicating the progress made by the Organizing Commission for that Congress, under the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Bearing in mind that on 7 September 1977 the Panama Canal Treaty and the Treaty concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal, known as the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, were signed in Washington, D.C., which stipulate that, at noon on 31 December 1999, the Canal, including all improvements, is to come under the control of the Republic of Panama,

Acknowledging the importance that the international community attaches to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and the positive implications that the strengthening of the nuclear-weapon-free regime established by that Treaty has for the permanent neutrality of the Panama Canal,

Welcoming the fact that, in anticipation of the holding of the Congress, Panama has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 3/ universally recognized as the framework for the adoption of national, regional and global measures in maritime matters, in harmony with chapter 17 of Agenda 21 4/ adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Reaffirming the utility of the Panama Canal for international maritime transport and the growth of the world economy, and the need to tackle the problems of interoceanic communication in the twenty-first century,

Noting with appreciation the activities being undertaken in various spheres by Governments, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the holding of the Universal Congress,

Recognizing that the next stages of preparation and organization of the Congress require increased efforts and the availability of greater resources,

1. Notes with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 50/12; 1/

2. Reiterates its firm support for the initiative of the Government of Panama, and urges it to continue to intensify its efforts to organize the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal at Panama City from 7 to 10 September 1997;

3/ Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

4/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I and Vol. I/Corr.1, Vol. II, Vol. III and Vol. III/Corr.1)) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions Adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

3. Renews its appeal to Member States generously to assist the Government of Panama, and calls upon intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to do likewise;

4. Again urges the competent organs, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the International Maritime Organization, to make every effort to provide assistance from within existing resources for the holding of the Universal Congress on the Panama Canal;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Universal Congress on the Panama Canal".

40th plenary meeting
24 October 1996